recommend the approval of an amended budget and an increase in the rate of assessment in conformance with § 979.41. Upon the basis of such recommendations, or other available information, the Secretary may approve an amended budget and increase the assessment rate. Such increase shall be applicable to all melons which were handled by each first handler thereof during such fiscal period;

(d) The payment of assessments for the maintenance and functioning of the committee may be required irrespective of whether particular provisions of this part are suspended or become inoperative;

(e) To provide funds for the administration of the provisions of this part the committee may accept the payment of assessments in advance;

(f) If a handler does not pay his assessment within the time prescribed by the committee, the assessment may be increased by a late payment charge or an interest charge at rates prescribed by the committee with the approval of the Secretary.

§ 979.43 Accounting.

(a) All funds received by the committee pursuant to the provisions of this part shall be used solely for the purposes specified in this part. At the end of the fiscal period an annual financial audit shall be conducted by a competent accountant and two copies sent to the Secretary;

(b) The Secretary may at any time require the committee, its members and alternates, employees, agents, and all other persons to account for all receipts and disbursements, funds, property, or records for which they are responsible. Whenever any person ceases to be a member of the committee or alternate, he shall account to his successor, the committee, or to the person designated by the Secretary, for all receipts, disbursements, funds and property (including but not limited to books and other records) pertaining to the committee's activities for which he is responsible, and shall execute such assignments and other instruments as may be necessary or appropriate to vest in the successor, the committee, or person designated by the Secretary,

the right to all such property and funds and all claims vested in such person:

(c) The committee may make recommendations to the Secretary for one or more of the members thereof, or any other person to act as a trustee for holding records, funds, or any other committee property during periods of suspension of this part, or during any period or periods when regulations under this part are not in effect, and, if the Secretary determines such action appropriate, he may direct that such person or persons may act as such trustee or trustees.

§ 979.44 Excess funds.

(a) If, at the end of a fiscal period the assessments collected are in excess of expenses incurred, each handler entitled to a proportionate refund of any such assessments which represent payments by the handler in excess of his pro rata share, shall be credited with such refund against his operations of the following fiscal period or such excess shall be accounted for in accordance with one of the following:

(1) The committee, with the approval of the Secretary, may establish an operating monetary reserve and may carry over to subsequent fiscal periods excess funds in a reserve so established, except funds in the reserve shall not exceed approximately two fiscal periods' expenses. Such reserve funds may be used (i) to defray any expenses authorized under this part, (ii) to defray expenses during any fiscal period prior to the time assessment income is sufficient to cover such expenses, (iii) to cover deficits incurred during any fiscal period when assessment income is less than expenses, (iv) to defray expenses incurred during any period when any or all provisions of this part are suspended or are inoperative, and (v) to cover necessary expenses of liquidation in the event of termination of this part. Any funds remaining after termination should be refunded to handlers on a pro rata basis. If it is found impracticable to return such remaining funds to handlers, such funds shall be disposed of in such manner as the Secretary may determine to be appropriate;